

Carex anthoxantha J. and K. Presl.
yellow-flowered sedge
Cyperaceae (Sedge Family)

Status: State Sensitive
Rank: G5S1

General Description: Adapted from FNA (2002): This species is a perennial rhizomatous sedge, 2 to 15¾ in. (5 to 40 cm) tall. The leaves are flat, straight, and 1/16 to 1/8 in. (1.5 to 2.5 mm) wide. Each solitary spike usually has either female or male flowers and rarely has both. The scales of the female spike are shorter than to equaling the perigynia. The perigynia are spindle shaped and thickest in the middle, erect or curving from the base, obscurely compressed-triangular, yellowish-green, membranous, smooth, many-nerved, and borne on a stalk. The beak and upper portion of the body of the perigynium is exposed above the scale. The perigynium is 1/8 in. (3 to 4 mm) and the margins of the apex are smooth. The beak tip is dark.

Identification Tips: *Carex anthoxantha* most closely resembles to *Carex circinata* (also rare in Washington). The growth form, leaves, and the margins of the perigynia can be used to distinguish these species. *C. anthoxantha* has long rhizomes, the leaves are flat, and the upper margins of the perigynia are smooth. *C. circinata* grows in tufts or small dense clumps and has short rhizomes, its leaves have margins that are rolled or turned in over the upper surface, and the upper margins of the perigynia are finely serrulate. A technical key is needed to distinguish this species (FNA 2002).

Phenology: In Washington, populations have been identified in August.

Range: *Carex anthoxantha* is a circumboreal species found in British Columbia, the Yukon, Alaska, Washington, and Eurasia. In Washington, this species has been found in Grays Harbor County. The Washington population is the southernmost population known in North America.

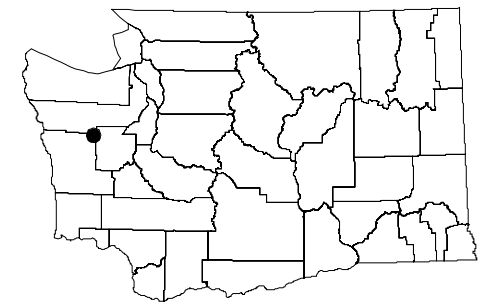
Habitat: Throughout its range, this chiefly coastal species grows near bogs, on grassy slopes, and in wet meadows at an elevation of 32 to 3281 ft (10 to 1000 m). In Washington, *Carex anthoxantha* has been found on the upper side of a road in a thickly vegetated, open wet meadow/seep area on northerly aspects at an elevation of 2800 ft (853 m). Associated species include marsh grass of Parnassus (*Parnassia palustris* var. *neogaea*), common ladyfern (*Athyrium filix-femina*), western oakfern (*Gymnocarpium dryopteris*), field horsetail (*Equisetum arvense*), sedges (*Carex* spp.), western pearly everlasting (*Anaphalis margaritacea*), clasping arnica (*Arnica amplexicaulis* var. *amplexicaulis*), Howell's marsh marigold (*Caltha biflora* var. *biflora*), Sierra larkspur (*Delphinium*

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Known distribution
of *Carex anthoxantha*
in Washington



● Current (1980+)
○ Historic (older than 1980)

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glaucum), willowherb (*Epilobium* spp.), common cowparsnip (*Heracleum lanatum*), wall-lettuce (*Lactuca muralis*), seep monkeyflower (*Mimulus guttatus* var. *guttatus*), woodland buttercup (*Ranunculus uncinatus*), Canadian burnet (*Sanguisorba sitchensis*), brook saxifrage (*Saxifraga arguta*), arrowleaf ragwort (*Senecio triangularis*), coastal hedgenettle (*Stachys cooleyae*), Sitka valerian (*Valeriana sitchensis*), American speedwell (*Veronica americana*), common gypsyweed (*Veronica officinalis*), nodding semaphoregrass (*Pleuropogon refractus*), fowl mannagrass (*Glyceria elata*), Scouler's willow (*Salix scouleriana*), and Alaska cedar (*Chamaecyparis nootkatensis*).

Ecology: *Carex anthoxanthea* grows in open moist areas from low to mid elevations along the coast.

State Status Comments: This species is known from fewer than 5 populations from within a small geographic area. The US Forest Service sensitive species policy provides some protection to known populations.

Inventory Needs: Bogs, grassy slopes, and wet meadows from low to mid elevations in Grays Harbor County should be systematically surveyed for additional populations. Known occurrences should be revisited. Current information about populations and habitat should be collected.

Threats and Management Concerns: Roadwork has possibly restricted the original habitat of the known populations. Ground disturbing activities are a potential threat.

Comments: This species is not described in the *Flora of the Pacific Northwest*.

References:

Flora of North America Editorial Committee eds. 2002. *Flora of North America North of Mexico Volume 23: Magnoliophyta: Commelinidae (in part): Cyperaceae*. Oxford University Press, New York, NY. 608 pp.

The Nature Conservancy and the WNHP. 1993. Species status summary global and Washington information for *Carex anthoxanthea*.